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General Assembly
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Official Records

41st plenary meeting
Thursday, 26 October 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of Mr. Kenneth K.S. Dadzie

The President: It is my sad duty to inform the General Assembly of the death in London yesterday of Mr. Kenneth K.S. Dadzie, former Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Mr. Dadzie was the fourth Secretary-General of UNCTAD. He held that position from 1 January 1986 through 31 March 1994. At the time of his death, he was High Commissioner of Ghana to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Mr. Dadzie was an outstanding international civil servant who demonstrated during his long and very distinguished career the highest intellectual and diplomatic skills and the deepest dedication to the ideals of the United Nations. Mr. Dadzie had tirelessly promoted the cause of development, and his legacy will remain with the United Nations as a benchmark for international cooperation.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to request the representative of Ghana to transmit to the Government of Ghana and to the family of Mr. Dadzie our expressions of profound sympathy.

May I ask representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Kenneth Dadzie.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I call on the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Lamptey (Ghana): First of all, let me thank the Assembly for its condolences, which I will faithfully transmit to the Government and the people of Ghana and to the family of Ambassador Kenneth K.S. Dadzie.

Yesterday was a sad day for Ghana, when we learned of the sudden death of this distinguished son of our country. Kenneth Kweku Sinaman Dadzie was born on 10 September 1930. At Accra High School, at Achimota College and at Queens College, Cambridge, he achieved brilliant academic distinction. Before the independence of Ghana, he was among the pioneer trainees selected by the Government and sent to Britain, as well as to France and other places, to study for the Ghana Foreign Service. He was attached to the British Foreign Office and subsequently served with the British Embassy in Paris. In 1957, he was appointed to the Ghana Foreign Service.

From 1960, when he was first sent to New York as Councillor Head of Chancery of the Ghana Permanent Mission, he was associated with this Organization, occupying distinguished positions within the United Nations. He contributed enormously to the work of this Organization. He was seconded to the United Nations from the Ghana Permanent Mission in 1963 and held

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several positions. Time will not allow me to enumerate all of these, but he rose within the system to occupy the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. He served his country also as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva, and, as you just noted, Sir, he died serving Ghana as High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

In 1980, a grateful nation conferred on him membership of the Order of Volta. The people of Ghana mourn a truly great son, but we believe that representatives here know best what this young man who left us so suddenly contributed to the world community.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Second report of the General Committee (A/50/250/Add.1)

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences (A/50/404/Add.1)

The President: This morning, I draw the attention of representatives first to the second report of the General Committee (A/50/250/Add.1), concerning two requests: first, a request by the delegation of the Philippines for the inclusion of an additional item, and secondly, a request by Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional sub-item under item 112, "Human rights questions".

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace" be included in the agenda of the current session and that it should be considered directly in plenary meeting for the purpose of endorsing the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. The Committee further recommends that the item should be allocated to the Second and Third Committees as appropriate for its substantive consideration.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 2 of the report, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that an additional sub-item, entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights", should be included as a sub-item of agenda item 112, "Human rights questions", and that it should be allocated to the Third Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: The Assembly will next turn its attention to document A/50/404/Add.1, which contains a letter dated 19 October 1995 addressed to the President of the Assembly by the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences. As members are aware, the Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its resolution 40/243, decided that no subsidiary organ should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

As indicated in the letter I have just mentioned, the Committee on Conferences has recommended that the General Assembly authorize the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Development and the High-level Open-ended Working Group on the Financial Situation of the United Nations to meet in New York during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 105

Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

commemoration to mark the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year

The President: The General Assembly, in accordance with the decision taken at its 3rd plenary meeting and pursuant to its resolution 49/152 of 23 December 1994, will hold, under agenda item 105, the first of the plenary meetings devoted to marking the

tenth anniversary of International Youth Year and to consider, with a view to adopting it, the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.

I am pleased and gratified to address the Assembly on this occasion to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year, and it is particularly interesting that this anniversary coincides with the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The Organization is reinvigorating itself, and I am convinced that today's youth, when they become the adults of tomorrow, will demonstrate their support towards this universal Organization and its goals.

Fifty years ago the United Nations was founded, based on a noble idea. That idea was — and still is — that each human being has individual dignity and worth. In all, 185 countries have joined this world body, stating their intention to voluntarily comply with its principles. These principles, embodied in the United Nations Charter, speak far better than anything else I may say, and are points of light for all of us.

With firm belief in these principles, we must reaffirm our faith by sharing them with our young people. To offer youth the opportunity to participate in the development and renewal of our societies is the greatest challenge and the greatest honour we may afford them. It is also our greatest responsibility and our finest reward.

Today the international community has gathered to reflect on the achievements and problems confronting youth, in order to advance the common historic purpose started in 1985 during International Youth Year. We are here today to build upon the positive processes created since the adoption in 1965 by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (resolution 2037 (XX)).

Investing in the youth of today enables them, as individuals, to fulfil their lifetime's potential. The benefits to young women and men can be counted in terms of individual achievement and self-development. For the nation, its gains are through tapping the storehouse of energy, resourcefulness, labour and enthusiasm of its youth. Such gains are not achieved without costs. Governments need to develop policies and invest in programmes which provide their young men and women with the opportunities to participate fully in the nation's economic and social development.

It is my sincere hope that this special plenary will be a landmark in the process of refining the international community's response to the challenge of youth, for those of us gathered here represent all sectors of society: Governments, which have the ultimate responsibility for solving the problems of youth; United Nations organizations and bodies, with their enriching expertise and specific mandates; intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly youth organizations — all are valuable partners with unique experience. I am confident that from these deliberations today, we will strengthen our commitment to the objectives of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.

I now call on the representative of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Desai (Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development): May I begin first by apologizing on behalf of the Secretary-General, who would very much have liked to be present because he has laid great stress on the importance of relating the work of the United Nations to the concerns of young people all over the world.

Just a few days ago the leaders of the world came together in this Hall, in a gathering which was both unprecedented and of immense significance, when they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. As we commemorated 50 years of the United Nations, we also looked to the tasks and challenges that lie in the years ahead, and especially to the challenge of preserving and strengthening the United Nations as a unique force for the maintenance of peace and in promoting development and social progress.

Reaching out to the young was the theme of many activities linked to the commemoration, and it is indeed appropriate that the very first act of the Assembly following the celebration of the Organization's fiftieth birthday is to turn the spotlight on young people — our future — to those who will have to nurture, maintain and run this institution in its next 50 years. Let me, therefore, welcome the participants who have gathered here today, who represent so many who are devoted and dedicated to the well-being of young people all over the world. I welcome the Ministers and high-level officials present. I welcome the youth representatives, and I welcome particularly the representatives of the young non-governmental organizations.

During the course of these plenary meetings, the Assembly will formally adopt, we hope, a World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. The central purpose of the Programme of Action is to provide a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. It emphasizes the measures that can best provide opportunities for young men and women for full, effective and constructive participation in society.

In a formal sense, the United Nations considers the age range from 15 to 24 as representing the youth life span, and measured in this sense there are about a billion young people in the world today. But young people of similar age often face very different problems, and live in surroundings that are as dissimilar as the conditions of the societies at large. Given all these important differences, it is not always easy to keep focused on the one core issue that binds youth together — on what one could call the essence of being young. That essence which defines youth is that youth is a period of transition. It is a passage from childhood and dependence to adulthood with its attendant rights and responsibilities. To make that passage safer, easier and constructive — that is the focus of all youth activities for the well-being of the individual and the benefit of society.

In all of us there exists both a conformist and a rebellious streak. Over a life span, the individual comes to reconcile the conflicting poles. In young people, that conflict is at its most intense.

Young men and women wish to fit into society and, yet, seeing the world with an uncynical eye, they also wish to change the world for the better. An enlightened youth policy creates a climate in which the appropriate balance between conformism and rebelliousness can best be struck. All of us, young and old, have a desire to be heard. But to get a hearing is not easy when one is young. It is, in fact, often a rare privilege. So, it is the underlying premise of the draft world Programme of Action that the best chance for success, for realizing its goals, is to be found in the concept of partnership. The value of the contribution that young people can make is maximized when their voices are heard. These voices, I should like to add, were certainly heard in the processes that brought the draft Programme of Action into being. Keeping in focus this dimension, the draft Programme addresses many practical concerns and issues, and I should like to refer to a few of them.

Almost 85 per cent of our young people live in developing countries. Their opportunities for education and training often remain limited, and social services are lacking. There is an incongruity, an imbalance, in many countries between education and the needs of the workplace. Rates of youth unemployment are much higher than average in practically every country and its this unemployment which often generates a sense of hopelessness and often contributes to social stress. The policies required to tackle youth unemployment are qualitatively different from those required for employment policy in general. We have to focus on new jobs for youth and not just protection of existing jobs.

Young people, as we can see so frequently, constitute a significant proportion of the refugees and displaced persons created by conflicts. Amongst young people, young women continue to encounter discrimination. Eighty-six million girls have no access to primary school education. Unemployment rates for young women remain higher than for young men. Exploitation and violence add to the impoverishment of young women. Globally, pregnancy-related complications are the main cause of death for girls between 15 and 19 years of age.

A large proportion of rural youth do not enjoy the benefits of development and progress because of the lack of access to resources, because of the lack of employment. A very large number of young people live in poverty as officially defined. Malnutrition, sexually transmitted diseases, particularly AIDS, and substance abuse are decimating young people in many parts of the world. Juvenile delinquency, and crime and violence by and against young people, are major problems around the world. The rapid transformation of many societies has weakened the capacity of families in the role of nurturing and socializing young people and equipping them for life. This role has not been fulfilled adequately by other institutions.

These are but some of the dimensions which have figured in the discussions on this draft Programme of Action, and some of the reasons why a particular focus on youth is necessary as a critical dimension of the pursuit of social progress.

The concern of the United Nations over youth found its expression in the proclamation in 1985 of International Youth Year. Within the framework of that Year, Member States have developed measures to improve youth programmes and to mobilize resources. The Year also provided an opportunity to articulate a policy on youth, not just in isolation but as an integral part of a complex

overall social reality. The various entities of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, have worked to provide the necessary international support for the objectives of the Year. They have strengthened their youth-oriented activities, stressing an integrated approach to youth concerns. Most important, non-governmental organizations have played a vital role in articulating the concerns of young people and in youth development activities in the framework of the Year, particularly as innovators at the community, local and grass-roots level. They have been a vital interlocutor with youth and have given life and participation to the process in a very authentic manner.

The draft Programme of Action incorporates many valuable initiatives generated in the many conferences that have been held. Today, we reaffirm that the needs and aspirations of young people are a global priority; that it is the right of young people to contribute to and participate in the life of society; that it is the responsibility of Governments to strive to create the necessary conditions. And to this end, we need a renewed sense of cooperation between Member States, the United Nations system, the private non-governmental organizations sector, and civil society. The adoption of the draft World Programme of Action is, of course, an important step. But, beyond that we need more active and continued advocacy, more form and commitment and more tangible actions. Governmental action will not be enough; we need the commitment of young people, the commitment of non-governmental organizations and the commitment of the United Nations system to support this process.

Fifty years from now, many who are here will surely be present in this room to commemorate the centenary of this institution. It must be our aim and hope that when they do so, they will be able to look back on a century of action and achievement to which they have been able to contribute — action and achievement for peace, justice and development for all people. I look forward to the debate and assure the General Assembly of the continued commitment of all the organizations of the United Nations system to promoting the concerns which are expressed, and the actions which are contemplated in the draft Programme which the Assembly will be considering.

The President: I should like to propose that the list of speakers for the plenary meetings devoted to marking the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year be closed at 11.15 this morning.

It was so decided.

The President: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the plenary meetings devoted to marking the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year to place their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

I now call on the representative of Spain, Mrs. Rosa Escapa, who will speak on behalf of the European Union.

Mrs. Escapa (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I have the honour, on behalf of the European Union, to participate in this special meeting of the General Assembly to mark the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. This anniversary represents a unique opportunity to assess the situation of youth around the world, and to consider the steps to be taken in the near future.

In 1985, International Youth Year, the world youth population, that is persons aged between 15 and 24 years, was 941 million. In 1995, the world youth population is estimated to be 1 billion. According to United Nations estimates, 85.9 per cent of the world's youth population lives in developing countries.

Young people constitute the major human resource for development in our societies. They are, in many sectors, the key agents for social change and technological innovation. But young people, particularly in developing countries, experience difficulties related to the lack of adequate educational, training and employment opportunities, as well as access to only poor health facilities and services. All of these factors can fuel social exclusion and marginalization.

Young people are especially vulnerable to poverty. Youth unemployment and underemployment are also prominent features of most societies around the world. In addition, rapid socio-economic change can be a cause of increased juvenile delinquency and drug abuse.

International Youth Year, proclaimed by the United Nations in 1985, based its strategies on three distinct, yet interrelated, themes: participation, development and peace. The objectives of the International Youth Year were set out in the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth, which served as a conceptual framework for youth work in ensuing years.

International Youth Year contributed to the creation, particularly at the national level, of channels of communication and participation for youth. It also helped

to direct attention to youth issues on national agendas, to establish national youth programmes and to strengthen youth organizations. The European Union holds the view that these goals of the International Youth Year are as valid today as they were a decade ago, and it considers that the draft World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond will constitute an important step in further promoting the aspirations of young people to participate fully in and to contribute actively to the life of our societies. We consider that it is the responsibility of States to facilitate and promote such participation.

The European Union hopes that the consensus achieved last week in the negotiations on the draft World Programme of Action for Youth will be maintained. We hope that the additional concerns that some delegations may have can be accommodated by international intervention and that the draft Programme of Action will be adopted during these special meetings.

The draft World Programme of Action for Youth pays special attention to the issue of youth participation. This is not only one of the specific priority areas but also an overriding general principle. The draft Programme also strongly emphasizes that its implementation requires the full enjoyment by young people of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Implementation of the draft Programme, as the Programme itself states, is ultimately the responsibility of Governments, with the support of the international community. Young people should be involved, at all appropriate levels, in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of youth policy. At the international level, the World Youth Forum can play an important role in the implementation of the draft Programme. Young men and young women have many needs in common, but it is all too easy to forget the specific needs of young women when programmes for young people are being developed. It is important also that governmental and non-governmental organizations alike actively take up young women's as well as young men's concerns at every stage of the planning of their programmes.

I should like to refer now to some aspects of the situation and concerns of young people in the context of the European Union. There are almost 60 million young people between the ages of 15 and 25 in the European Union. Their participation and active involvement in the construction of Europe, as citizens conscious of their rights and responsibilities, are an enormous potential for our societies, on which the future of the Union depends. Sectoral policies affecting young people, and especially the community programmes specifically targeted at the young, are tools for the development of a European Union policy of cooperation in the field of youth. In the European Union the policy of cooperation on youth issues is part of a broad concept of developing active citizenship on the part of young people. To move towards the development of active citizenship, the European Union has begun coordinated action, especially through the Youth for Europe programme, aimed at supporting the youth socio-educational process outside the formal educational framework.

Exchanges between youth groups and youth associations are important mechanisms of Community cooperation policy in the field of youth. Within the framework of these mechanisms, projects designed and carried out by young people themselves, pursuant to their own interests — projects in various thematic areas, such as the fight against social exclusion and racism, conservation of local heritage, protection of the environment, cultural and artistic expression, employment, health and youth rights — contribute to the active commitment of young people to a social integration process and to the development of their social, professional, cultural and personal attitudes.

A policy of cooperation in the field of youth that focused exclusively on the intra-Community level would not be complete and would go against our basic principles on the development of active citizenship on the part of young people.

Finally, it is important to point out that cooperation on youth issues in the European Union cannot be developed effectively without the active participation of young people through their representative structures, particularly the World Youth Forum.

The European Union cooperates actively with other countries on youth issues. This cooperation includes the exchange of knowledge and experience in respect of such matters as youth employment, the training of youth directors and information related to youth. It also involves the promotion of exchange programmes with young people from countries outside the European Union.

We also want to take this opportunity to recognize and stress the importance of the contribution of the Council of Europe in respect of youth issues. An example of this contribution is the current European youth

campaign against racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance.

The success of efforts in the elaboration of the draft World Programme of Action for Youth depends primarily on Government commitment to its implementation at the national level, with the full involvement of youth.

All the recent major United Nations Conferences have devoted attention to the specific needs of youth. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development called for the involvement of youth in environment and development planning and decision-making as well as in the subsequent implementation of measures adopted. The International Conference on Population and Development gave attention to the reproductive rights and reproductive health of young people as well as to a number of related population issues. The World Summit for Children and the World Conference on Human Rights, the latter of which was held in Vienna, put emphasis on the rights of the child and the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all.

Furthermore, the Fourth World Conference on Women stressed again that gender roles greatly affect the situation of young people. Young women and girls face discrimination in all societies from an early age, particularly with regard to access, on an equal basis with boys and young men, to the opportunities that society offers, as well as participation in the decision-making processes at all levels. Equal rights, including sexual rights such as the right of the individual to have control over and decide freely on matters related to his or her sexuality, was one of the aspects stressed by the Beijing Conference.

In Copenhagen, on the occasion of the World Summit for Social Development, Heads of State and Government agreed to give the highest priority in national, regional and international policies and actions to the promotion of social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition, based on full participation for all. The Summit acknowledged and considered the contribution of people of all age groups as equally and vitally important for the building of a harmonious society, and stressed the need for fostering dialogue between generations in all parts of society. More specifically, the Summit underlined the need to give special attention to long-term unemployment and underemployment of youth within national efforts to put the creation of employment and the reduction of unemployment at the centre of strategies and policies of governments. In the present context, that also underlines the need for providing access to education for all.

The Programme of Action adopted by the Summit also stressed the need for:

> "Encouraging youth to participate in discussions and decisions affecting them and in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes; ensuring that youth acquire the skills to participate in all aspects of life in society and to lead self-sufficient lives through the provision of relevant and innovative educational programmes; and establishing laws and measures that ensure the protection of youth against physical and mental abuse and economic exploitation". *(A/CONF.166/9, annex II, para. 75 (i))*

The European Union thinks that the follow-up of the outcomes of the recent major United Nation conferences should form the appropriate framework for future activities related to youth issues. We believe that the draft World Programme of Action we are adopting should be placed in this global perspective. The participation of youth — young men and women — in the implementation of the World Programme of Action will be the best way of pursuing our efforts to ensure that young people find their rightful place in our societies.

The President: I now call on Mr. Martin Kargl, Youth Representative of Austria.

Mr. Kargl (Austria): Before I start, let me point out that I fully endorse the statement just made by the Spanish delegate on behalf of the European Union. Please let me add some comments from a youth's perspective.

On behalf of Austria's young women and men and the Austrian youth organizations, I am glad to convey to you our warmest congratulations on this fiftieth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. The efforts made to achieve the aims of the United Nations Charter are, despite all problems, indispensable and must not be underestimated by any government or organization today or the future. We, today's young generation, feel responsible for upholding and spreading the spirit of the Charter.

Young people must have a more important role in the social and political development of the world. We no longer want to be objects of governments' youth policies, but want to participate fully in building our own future. This future must be one of peace and justice. Therefore, all young people and youth organizations have to be recognized as partners of governments at all levels. The

reform process now under way within the United Nations system should include the creation of a proper framework in which non-governmental youth organizations can meet and participate.

In Austria, more and more, youth organizations are successfully involved in the political decision-making process. The co-management system between youth non-governmental organizations and governments, well established in the Council of Europe since 1972, is now also implemented at the national level. For the first time, everyone is working together on an equal footing in the European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance. We would also like to see this co-management within the United Nations, in order to improve the quality of United Nations youth work.

In the same spirit, I hope that more countries will follow the Austrian example by involving their youth organizations in national youth policies and in their work within the United Nations.

In the follow-up to International Youth Year in Austria, local, regional and national children and youth parliaments took place. At the same time, independent ombudspersons were appointed to protect the rights of children and youth.

The historic changes in Central and Eastern Europe affected the life and future of all young people in Austria. Youth exchange and training programmes with countries in transition have been organized in the spirit of peace and mutual understanding.

A major national initiative resulting from International Youth Year is HOPE '87, which stands for "Hundreds of Original Projects for Employment". This Association is affiliated with the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and is active in more than 15 countries around the world. Austria is the main contributor. HOPE '87 creates jobs for young people and supports training programmes by providing grant schemes and seed money for self-employment. HOPE '87 supports the reconstruction of educational facilities in Sarajevo and the vocational training of war-disabled young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I have mentioned the positive cooperation between my Government and Austrian non-governmental organizations in the ongoing campaign against racism and intolerance. In this respect I want to draw attention to the recent report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees which supports the struggle of non-governmental organizations in the field of human rights and youth for an asylum law in full accordance with the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and other human rights instruments.

As representative of the Austrian Youth Council I welcome the United Nations headquarters in Vienna. I hope that the United Nations will continue to be a place where youth organizations have a voice, so that youth can still trust someone over 50.

The President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Ecuador, Mr. Valencia Rodríguez.

Mr. Valencia Rodriguez (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the following countries, members of the Rio Group: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

It is a fortunate coincidence that young people are meeting in New York at the very time that we are commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The leaders of the world have reflected on the achievements of the Organization and on the important role that the Organization can appropriately play in the future, in the next millennium.

The contradictions of relations between peoples and technological and scientific advances are a sign of our times. The problems go beyond the borders of States and require joint and common action to tackle them and develop strategies in order to work together for a new world of peace and equity.

We are convinced that it is necessary as a matter of priority to deal with young people's problems, which have become particularly acute because of the difficult economic and social circumstances most countries are undergoing. Differences in living standards between the industrialized countries and the developing countries have become more marked. The highest percentage of young people is to be found in our countries — 84 per cent in 1995 — and it is projected that this figure will increase to 89 per cent by the year 2025.

Poverty in our countries directly affects our young people, who cannot develop their potential because of the lack of opportunities in education, unemployment, the shortage of recreational centres, and inadequate health

services, among other problems. Urban marginalization is growing and its effects are well-known — juvenile violence, drug addiction, illiteracy.

The youth of the world, as a force for renewal, have the ability to play a more active role in the decision-making process in society. In the face of future challenges, special attention must be paid to their problems, needs and aspirations.

In that respect, we endorse the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 49/152 and 49/154 of 23 December 1994. They point the way to mobilizing all the creativity and energy of youth to build a new community of nations based on mutual understanding, respect for cultural, religious and racial differences, equal rights for men and women, and social and economic well-being for all.

Mr. Odlum (Saint Lucia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Our countries attach particular importance to economic and social conditions, whose deterioration has not only affected the physical, intellectual and emotional development of young people, but is threatening their very survival.

Young people's conduct, with these obvious social disadvantages, will lead to widespread problems. In the near future, new families will be formed with similar conflicts. This could result in a serious deterioration in the social nucleus and inevitably limit the possibilities of full development of a large portion of the world's population.

We believe that educational programmes play a particularly important role. The contents of these programmes must be designed to promote respect for human rights and protection of the environment, and to generate an atmosphere of peace, understanding and mutual respect among peoples.

The countries of the Rio Group believe in the need to implement mechanisms for regional and global cooperation with a view to promoting technical cooperation, research and communication among the young people of the entire world.

The competent United Nations bodies should intensify their efforts to formulate and implement plans of action for the development of youth. Special emphasis must be placed on health programmes, malnutrition, poverty, education, housing, juvenile delinquency and drug abuse. Young people should play a dynamic part in all activities to promote and recognize their rights.

Finally, our countries wish to state that they attribute special importance to the World Programme of Action for Youth, and we reiterate our commitment to the implementation of all the recently adopted international instruments concerning the protection of the environment and human rights, the declarations on social development, and the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women. It is on the basis of these instruments that strategies and actions will be defined to tackle the problems of today's youth and protect the rights of future generations.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kadirgamar (Sri Lanka): Allow me first to refer to the late Mr. Kenneth Dadzie, whose death last night in London we deeply mourn. I wish to say that Mr. Dadzie was a good friend to Sri Lanka. He worked with us and our officials over many decades of activity in international forums. I knew him myself personally very well, and so did many of those who have represented our country in the last few decades. We would like to join sincerely in the expressions of condolence and the tributes that have been paid to him this morning.

I am particularly pleased to participate in this special meeting of the General Assembly devoted to youth issues. Sri Lanka and other non-aligned countries at the Cairo Ministerial Meeting contributed to developing the consensus which paved the way for this high-level meeting.

In Sri Lanka, the Government and the opposition parties are united in the high priority we all accord to the problems of youth. Youth questions are closely intertwined with key social development as well as peace and security issues. The special attention being given to youth issues is timely. A global youth population of over one billion represents a dynamic force of creativity and change. Young people are the principal agents of change. They are at the same time the beneficiary or victim of those changes. They continue to grapple with the obvious, but yet to be resolved, dilemma of whether to integrate with the existing order or to serve as a force for transforming that order.

United Nations statistics show that the majority of the world youth population lives in the developing world. The youth potential, either as a force of stability and prosperity, or as a vehicle for instability and violence would naturally be manifest in greater intensity and visibility in the developing world. It is therefore vital that we take cognizance of the problems and the promise of young people and provide opportunities and encouragement for them to channel their energies into socially desirable activities. Frustrated youth aspirations have often given rise to recurring social instability and political violence within States. Societies and the established order neglect youth aspirations at their peril. History is replete with instances of youth frustration militating against development and social progress in rich as well as poor countries when the existing political and social institutions were either unwilling or unable to respond meaningfully and in a timely manner to youth problems and aspirations. I must, with a sense of sadness, refer to a distressing development which is not unique to Sri Lanka. It is the use of children in war. In our own internal conflict youths, sometimes as young as 10 years of age, have been conscripted for war by a militant ethnic group. I will not go into detail, as I have already done so in my statement to the General Assembly a few weeks ago.

Young people worldwide are a major human resource for progress and the prime movers of innovation. The imagination and idealism of youth and their collective energies would be the creative impulse for any vision of the future for any nation. The problems young people face and the drive they manifest provide political indices for devising strategies for socio-economic development. The degree to which the Governments and the established order successfully address youth problems and the manner in which they utilize the youth potential and meet the challenges presented by them could determine the extent of success of any society, any Government or any country.

We are therefore very happy that the General Assembly decided to devote this meeting to mark the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year and to consider the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. Sri Lanka notes with appreciation the work accomplished by the Commission on Social Development and the Secretariat to finalize the World Programme of Action. Sri Lanka has made its own contribution to the development of these plans. The decade since the adoption of the International Youth Year has been an eventful one in terms of profound changes that have taken place within and among nations. The World Programme of Action provides a good framework and multi-sectoral standards relevant to policy making, as well as specific action at international, regional and, most importantly, the national levels. In the final analysis however, young people themselves, together with their national Governments and their grass-roots organizations, should develop the most appropriate and viable partnerships in order to address and resolve the problems of youth in the priority areas identified by the international community.

We note that the Programme of Action has been conceived as an indicative framework for integrated action with a view to enhancing young people's participation in society. This will afford sufficient flexibility for national Governments, national organizations and young people themselves to develop their own models and institutions. In this context, we were pleased to note that the document produced by the Commission on Social Development and the Secretariat has taken on board several of the areas identified by developing countries as requiring priority action, such as education, employment, poverty, health, drug abuse, girls and young women. Sri Lanka for its part provided its inputs to the deliberations leading to the finalization of the Programme of Action, and we note with appreciation that the overriding theme of the Programme of Action is facilitating the effective participation of youth in the life of society and in the decision-making process.

We in Sri Lanka have taken concerted action to rationalize and coordinate vocational and technical training centres through reforms based on a comprehensive research programme. With the opening up of the Sri Lankan economy, it has been our policy to rectify the imbalance between the labour market demand and the output of the education system. The rationalization of vocational training is geared to a demand-driven training system that can assist the expanding private sector, where the bulk of the future employment opportunities would be available to young people. The overall objective of this strategy is to rectify the so-called education-employment mismatch.

Action is being taken to consult industry in designing and managing relevant education and training systems, while emphasis is also given to developing training courses which are market responsive.

As regards the other priority areas of hunger and poverty, we have already registered considerable achievements in meeting the basic needs of the people and in ensuring basic nutritional intake. This has been augmented by the launching of the Samurdhi, or

prosperity, movement in the country, which will effectively act as a cushion for vulnerable groups against the economic burdens of a liberalized economy. The timeliness of launching a global movement to ensure prosperity for all in this era of rapid globalization of economic activities was noted at the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen. In Sri Lanka, the Samurdhi programme is designed to activate the entrepreneurial potential of the poor. The young people affected by poverty are thus given the opportunity and the resource base to develop self-reliant entrepreneurship at the local level, utilizing local market potential and appropriate technology. The programme's emphasis on measures targeted on rural youth is particularly welcome, as these measures cover a broad front for action in a variety of fields such as agriculture, skill training, land, industry and food production.

With regard to drug abuse, Sri Lanka has a comprehensive national policy based on enforcement, preventive education, treatment, rehabilitation and international and regional cooperation. As regards girls and young women, Sri Lanka and other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries have been at the forefront in the protection and promotion of the rights of female children and women. A series of specific national and regional meetings at the highest level was convened to address these issues, and vigorous national and regional initiatives are under way. SAARC Heads of State or Government have always attached priority to youth issues. Social stability and economic development in this highly populous region of the world will be greatly dependent upon the satisfaction of the aspirations of youth.

There are other aspects of importance addressed in the World Programme before the Assembly at this plenary meeting. One of the most important is the need for, and the essential role of, international cooperation to promote conditions conducive to the implementation of the Programme. There is no doubt that the main focus of attention and the principal actors in the implementation will be at the national level. It is, however, equally important that international and regional cooperation and assistance should be forthcoming in a generous manner.

We have seen many well-meaning international documents and commitments remain unrealized because of the paucity of resources and lack of institutional support. We only hope that the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth will not suffer the same fate. Youth issues are far too important a matter to be sidelined or neglected for want of funds. The cross-pollination of ideas which will be a natural outgrowth of international cooperative activities on this issue could very well enrich and enhance national action. Non-governmental organizations could also contribute to this process. There is therefore a need to develop an effective partnership between the key players, Governments, intergovernmental bodies, youth organizations and other interested non-governmental organizations. We hope that the final outcome of this high-level meeting will give a strong impetus to developing such partnerships among the principal actors in this field so that the World Programme of Action will have sound institutional and political support at all levels — international, regional and national.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Ordzhonikidze (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): It is very significant that this solemn meeting of the General Assembly on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year has coincided precisely with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, for youth is the most dynamic and promising sector of society. Speaking metaphorically, it is the gold reserve of each country and of our entire planet.

It is also emblematic that we are considering problems of youth at the time when we are commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, for it was precisely the young who had to bear the brunt of the war: it was they who had to don uniforms and die and on the battlefield instead of doing productive work to help their countries flourish. For Russia this subject is particularly sensitive. Most of the 26 million victims of the war were young people who never had a chance to establish a family, raise children or help improve their countries. The consequences of this horrible tragedy still have repercussions for our country, as they do for many others. For this reason, we are very pleased that at this jubilee session the General Assembly, on the initiative of Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, adopted the Declaration in Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the End of the Second World War. We hope that all States will take account of the errors of the past in order to safeguard for youth a future without wars, conflicts, xenophobia, racism, nationalism or political and socio-economic crises.

The world community, if it is united, can succeed in solving even the most difficult problems of youth. In that

context, we find it appropriate and necessary to develop and adopt the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. The Russian delegation took an active part in all stages of the preparation of this document, which is unique and comprehensive in terms of its effect on global development. The balanced draft Programme reflects the various problems of young people in all countries, including those in transition. The document sets out the fundamental areas for work in respect of youth, and its implementation will determine whether in the near future we will create the conditions necessary for each country's sustainable development or conditions for crisis and conflict, which, in today's interdependent world, would inevitably spill over State borders and adversely affect the social, economic and political situation of the world at large.

I must note, unfortunately, that yesterday attempts were made to amend the agreed draft, which prevented the Programme from being adopted at the meeting of the Economic and Social Council. We hope that the differences will be overcome so that we can still adopt the document on schedule.

The universality of youth problems is reflected in the documents of the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. The preparations for those very important forums involved the participation of almost all United Nations bodies and specialized agencies. Therefore, in the light of the interest shown by all groups of countries, it would probably be appropriate to prepare an inter-agency plan of action on youth, with effective follow-up machinery for implementation. By the same token, clearly, no international programmes or United Nations efforts will produce the desired result if due attention is not paid to youth problems at the national level.

This was precisely the consideration that guided the Russian Federation when it adopted the decree on Russia's preparations for, and commemoration of, the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, which provided for the formation of an interdepartmental commission and a plan of action aimed at drawing the attention of leaders at all levels to youth problems and the need for their solution.

On the whole, work on youth in Russia is carried out on the basis of a federal programme called Russia's Youth, adopted by the Russian Government on 25 February 1994. This programme defines not only the role of youth in carrying out reforms in our country but also its role in the present difficult societal circumstances. Today, young people, who account for approximately 40 per cent of the total active population of Russia, are among the first to experience the hardships of an economy in transition.

The purpose of the Russian national programme is to establish legal, economic and organizational machinery for implementing Government youth policies. One of the priority areas of the work of the Russian Administration is to establish a legislative and legal basis for Government youth policies. In recent years, an entire body of laws has been drawn up and promulgated regarding youth and children. These focus on the working conditions of young people, protection of young families, social support of students, measures to establish Government-sponsored children's and youth recreation facilities, and so on. They give particular attention to the prevention of delinquency among juveniles and minors. For this purpose, an interdepartmental task force has been set up; it is completing work on a bill directed at improving Government intervention in this field.

In the area of combatting the spread of drug abuse among young people, the Russian Government plans to adopt, in the very near future, a federal programme defining integrated measures to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking.

An effective solution to youth problems at the national level is impossible without the development of international cooperation. Today, Russia has intergovernmental agreements on cultural cooperation with almost 50 States, on the basis of which youth activities are developed. Representatives of Russian youth organizations participate in seminars and conferences, such as those held under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

In the context of cooperation with the United Nations and with its support, an international conference was held in Russia this year on "Youth in a transitional society". In addition, a project is under way involving the training, under United Nations auspices, of Government officials dealing with youth problems.

The Russian delegation would like to underscore that our country will in future participate actively in the solution of youth problems. Russia remains open to any mutually advantageous cooperation in this field at the national, regional and international levels.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of the Marshall Islands, Ms. Moss.

Ms. Moss (Marshall Islands): Allow me to congratulate Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral and the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Social development is a very broad concept, and it has far-reaching consequences. In addition, the associated costs can be quite crippling, but the benefits that we can reap are endless. This is an important consideration, which has been taken into account in the document prepared by the South Pacific Commission, "Pacific Islands Social and Human Development", which my Government fully endorses. This document, which reflects the constraints and realities that the small island developing States face, was submitted to the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development as a document of the conference.

My delegation participated actively in that Summit, and we feel a strong affinity for the draft Programme of Action. There are concepts in this draft Programme that form the very basis of social interaction in the Marshall Islands. I note the strong advocacy for human rights, which, in our view, could be strengthened even further. These human rights are fundamental and inalienable, and they are imperative for social development to be successful. As a matrilineal society, we are strongly supportive of gender equality. We also accept the need to have strong democratic institutions, and open government.

The draft Programme of Action gives due recognition to the traditional and cultural rights to land, and to the intricate connection that exists between land and social norms in the Marshall Islands. As this same recognition, if only in slightly stronger terms, is part of our Constitution, it would be very difficult for my delegation to have this reference removed.

As we stated at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and the Copenhagen Summit, the Marshall Islands has a very high population-growth rate. The effect is that the majority of the population is under 15 years old. This is bound to cause problems for us in the future, since we will need to provide the required social and economic opportunities for them. We also have in our population displaced victims of the nuclear-testing programme that was carried out in our islands in the 1940s and 1950s. Although the victims receive some compensation as a result of the testing, those funds are insufficient to rehabilitate their lands, provide necessary medical care and compensate for the personal injuries that, to this day, they continue to suffer from.

The key issue for the Marshall Islands is whether or not there will be any assistance from outside sources for the programmes of action of Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing. We would dearly love to see all their provisions implemented in the Marshall Islands, but the fact remains that we simply do not have the funding to do these things by ourselves. I must therefore appeal to the international community to look favourably on the Marshall Islands. In particular, I would ask the non-governmental organizations to commit themselves to helping us in fulfilling these commitments that we are undertaking. The sheer scale of undertaking social development is extremely difficult for us, since we simply do not have the strength or the resources to completely provide for the development needs of our people. Currently, our expenditures on the social sector outstrip any of our other budgetary expenses. We are therefore very interested in the 20/20 concept endorsed at the Copenhagen Summit.

The urban migration and high population growth in the Marshall Islands that I have alluded to are quite a challenge for my Government. Young people who come to the urban centres looking for jobs — jobs that are often hard to come by — are creating a major concern for us. Unemployment often leads to idleness and delinquency. It becomes a breeding ground for alcoholism and the scourge of drugs. The extended family structure that would nurture, protect and give guidance to the individual in rural areas is broken down in the urban centres and, as a result, there is a distinct rise in the loss of traditional values and respect. However, my Government is consolidating efforts with various cultural organizations, as we try to bring in greater knowledge of history and pride in the culture of the Marshall Islands. This culture has at its basis respect for elders and for the community, and mutual respect among individuals. It will therefore revitalize the guidance that the breakdown of the family can destroy.

The Marshall Islands has therefore instituted a youth policy to educate and socialize our young people from an early stage, to make them feel part of the larger community, and to be active participants in the development of society. Earlier this year our communities launched Pacific Youth Week, which covered areas such as population education, family planning and suicide, and included youth representatives from at least 10 youth groups. Furthermore, as a State party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we have recently enacted

legislation that will strengthen our commitments under that Convention.

Basic education is mandated under our Constitution. We have therefore prepared a Ten Year Education Plan, a policy which aims to encourage community-based education. We are building more schools in the rural areas to reduce the trend of the urban migration for those seeking education. Moreover, secondary education is now compulsory, and our plan also encourages the youth of our country to get themselves a higher education. Our scholarship program provides assistance for those young people who wish to continue on to higher education. We are cooperating with the grass-roots and community-based organizations, like the churches and the youth organizations, to address these matters in a comprehensive manner.

The President returned to the Chair.

My Government is further required under our Constitution to provide basic health care; thus we have instituted a comprehensive health insurance scheme. It covers all citizens, and contributions are shared by the Government and those who are employed. During April of this year we celebrated National Health Month, in which we made efforts to promote the importance of local food for health. The focus on local food was largely aimed at the growing deficiency of Vitamin A in Marshallese children. Because of this growing health concern, our Ministries of Health, Education, Social Services, Internal Affairs and Research and Development distributed Vitamin A pills to over 6,000 children. Since we recognize that Vitamin A distribution is only a short-term solution, health promotion education was a major focus of the campaign.

My Government has made a conscious effort to reduce public sector employment, which accounts for 70 per cent of the annual budget. We are thus encouraging private sector development with incentives, and privatizing some public services. In addition to freeing up resources for expenditures in social development, we are cutting costs, improving efficiency and encouraging participation by the citizens. An example is the newly established National Training Council, which will provide technical and vocational training to young school leavers, as an alternative to other studies. We are also hopeful that the Council can institute some on-the-job training. By building our economy through private and local endeavours, we can better control our future development.

We are currently studying the report of the 1995 World Youth Leaders Conference and find that universally, the development process is facilitated through encouraging education and community participation by our young citizens. Therefore, we feel that it is important now, more than ever, that we invest greatly in our youth, because it is the international youth of the present who can most effectively contribute to positive and sustainable development of the future. My Government will continue to plan and implement programmes focused on youth participation and education, and we will continue to seek outside resources to aid us in the successful outcome of our social development programs. In this regard, we will work with other interested delegations in drafting a constructive resolution to help us achieve our goals in social development.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso Mr. Ablassé Ouédraogo.

Mr. Ouédraogo (Burkina Faso) (*interpretation from French*): First of all, on behalf of the people and the Government of Burkina Faso, I wish to offer our sincere condolences to the delegation of Ghana, to the bereaved family, and to the people of Ghana. We have lost a true son of Ghana and of Africa: Kenneth Dadzie. His life was devoted to the service of the rehabilitation of Africa and to ensuring the implementation of the lofty goals of the United Nations. May he rest in peace. We hope that his example will be a fertile and beneficial model for us and for future generations.

Fifty years after the establishment of the United Nations, we are marking the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. Indeed, 1985 witnessed the adoption of the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow-up in the field of youth. Since then, numerous problems and blights have beset youth. Simultaneously, during the last five years, the United Nations has sought to ensure that the youth and its specific needs become recognized in the plans and programmes for action elaborated on at the following global forums: in New York for the child, Rio for the environment, Vienna for human rights, Cairo for population, Copenhagen for social development and Beijing for women.

We must consider as a sign of the times the nature of the concern for youth. In the past, this exalted us and made us inevitably conclude that youth was the promise of a radiant future and progress. Today, in the wake of

various ills that affect young people, we are divided between hope and anxiety. The malfunctioning of our societies, conflicts, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, drug abuse, AIDS, and crime are among the main afflictions of youth.

In resolution 47/85 of 16 December 1992, the General Assembly set out policies and measures necessary for addressing and resolving youth problems. A world programme of action was put to Member States, with a view to arriving at a common denominator for action and assessment to the year 2000 and beyond.

It is clear that what we here hope, what we seek for and with youth, is that the cultural and social diversity of young people must be taken into account, together with the particularly difficult situations they sometimes experience. Young people in difficulty constitute the most vulnerable elements of a social category that is already vulnerable.

Burkina Faso, for its part, has acted and responded at two levels — national and international. It has acted in four areas: those of education, health, the environment and combatting unemployment. At the national level, and more specifically in terms of organizational measures, Burkina Faso has established within the Ministry for Youth and Sports an office on youth, in which action for young people is indexed, coordinated and stimulated through the involvement of all youth movements and through the organization of seminars on problems affecting youth and development.

In the field of education, Burkina Faso has developed a policy to teach human rights and the fundamental principles of the Constitution of Burkina Faso in schools, in centres of professional training and in centres providing functional literacy. The Government has also sought to reduce disparities between boys and girls by facilitating, and even by giving priority access to the latter to educational institutions, particularly primary institutions. In that area, in order to extend the scope of application to all forms of education and training, the Government of Burkina Faso has also organized a seminar for the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the national plan for the education of girls.

In the field of health and the environment, we have devised and implemented information and education programmes including seminars and lectures on sexually transmitted diseases and environmental preservation. Reforestation camps for young people have been organized. The National Commission on Drug Control and the Ministry on Territorial Administration are working actively to promote awareness and to mobilize efforts against drug abuse and narcotics trafficking, as well as in the area of juvenile delinquency and rehabilitation of delinquents into society, with the support of the Ministry for Social Action and the Family. Ours is a policy both of prevention and of cure, in the light of the moral and material damage that psychotropic substances have done elsewhere and of the potential dangers in our own country. The social fabric is irrevocably affected; the moral fabric is torn; and the future of youth is stymied in an impasse.

In the area of combatting unemployment, the Government of Burkina Faso has undertaken a review of the labour code in order to identify ways and means of stimulating new enterprises, the creation of jobs, the execution of support projects for the integration of young people in the field of stock-breeding and agriculture.

In that context, irrigated lands in the Province of Sourou have been entrusted to young unemployed graduates. They have been provided with agricultural equipment and paid a wage to work these areas. Moreover, a support fund for the informal sector was set up, as was a fund to support money-earning activities among women.

At the international level, the young people of Burkina Faso, *inter alia*, in addition to the solidarity shown with the youth of South Africa and the entire world, took part in the "Youth 21" forum in Côte d'Ivoire and are preparing for the Pan-African Youth Conference to be held in Ethiopia on the theme of "Participation, Development and Peace" — the same theme as International Youth Year.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/85, national meetings on youth are scheduled in Burkina Faso to draw up and implement a national programme of action through which we intend to involve young people to a greater extent in the country's socio-economic and cultural development process.

This has been a brief and partial overview of what my country has done since the adoption in 1985 of the guidelines for youth. However, before I conclude, I should like to express Burkina Faso's support for the designation of a World Youth Day during which each State would take stock of progress and identify and follow up on ways and means to implement what remains to be done. Young people, together with their elders, will

be the main actors in determining their future and be given responsibility for it.

Burkina Faso attaches particular importance to the follow-up to the draft World Programme of Action for Youth and feels that the United Nations department responsible for social development should be strengthened by the establishment of a youth division which, in turn, would work with the Commission for Social Development on the follow-up to the draft Programme of Action.

Most important of all, the young people of Burkina Faso, in the same way as young people throughout the world, in a spirit of mutual respect, should be aware that they are part of one and the same youth, rich in diversity and strong in vitality in the face of all the pitfalls.

Problems of frontiers, living conditions, and economic and social inequalities generated by the current world economic order are slowing down this momentum and cloud the vision of a world that is one and many at the same time, diverse and unique, friendly and fraternal. Our ardent wish is that young people, despite everything, in the face of and regardless of everything, will right the wrongs in the world and advance irresistibly towards a world of brotherhood, justice and peace.

The President: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting devoted to marking the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to invite delegates to remain seated as immediately following the adjournment of this meeting, I shall have the honour to preside over a special briefing. At the briefing, delegations will hear representatives from several youth non-governmental organizations speak of their activities in support of the United Nations Youth Programme.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.